



**TO: PUBLIC SAFETY, FINANCE &
STRATEGIC SUPPORT COUNCIL
COMMITTEE**

FROM: Deanna J. Santana

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: August 13, 2009

Approved

Date

8/13/09

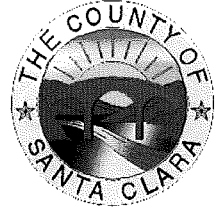
**SUBJECT: REPORT REGARDING SAN JOSE CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT
EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE TO THE COUNTY OF SANTA
CLARA JAIL**

Attached please find the County of Santa Clara, Office of the County Executive report on the County Jail. This report was presented to the Public Safety & Justice Committee on August 6, 2009 and was approved by the County Committee as a Consent Calendar item.

Deanna J. Santana
Deputy City Manager

Attachment (1)

County of Santa Clara Office of the County Executive




PSJC-CE02 080609

Prepared by: Kathy Maniaci
Principal Executive Advisor to the
County Executive

DATE: August 6, 2009

TO: Supervisor George Shirakawa, Chairperson
Supervisor Donald F. Gage, Vice Chair
Public Safety & Justice Committee

FROM: 
Gary A. Graves
Acting County Executive

SUBJECT: County Jail: San Jose Fire Department Emergency Medical Services and Fire Response

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Accept report relating to the County Jail and the San Jose Fire Department's emergency medical services (EMS) and fire responses.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no fiscal impact to the general fund associated with this action. It is an informational report.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

Since spring 2008, management from the County Department of Correction, County Communications, and Santa Clara Valley Health and Hospital System (EMS and Children's Shelter and Custody Health Services) have been in discussions with management from the San Jose Fire Department (City Fire) to resolve safety concerns relating to City Fire's EMS and fire responses to the County Jail.

On April 2, 2008, San Jose Councilmember Oliverio raised concerns about firefighter safety when City Fire responds to the County Jail for emergency medical services to inmates. On April 18, 2008, City staff responded with preliminary findings through the City's Public Safety, Finance and Strategic Support Committee (PSFSSC). Six months later, City staff presented the PSFSSC with a status report. This coming August 20, another progress report will be provided to the City's PSFSSC. This time, however, it will be a joint city/county response.

San Jose City Manager Deb Figone and Acting County Executive Gary Graves felt it prudent to prepare a joint city/county response to demonstrate the County and City's partnership on issues of mutual interest, particularly on issues that, ultimately, benefit the clientele being served and the community-at-large. Please refer to Attachment "A" – City/County Joint Response, which will be shared with the City's PSFSSC on August 20.

All participating entities agree that, through increased communication, additional training, and joint exercises, most issues have been clarified or settled. The remaining issues, listed on page 7 of the attachment, under "Next Steps", are still under discussion and progressing well.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A.City.County Joint Response.July 2009

ATTACHMENT A



TO: PUBLIC SAFETY & JUSTICE
BOARD COMMITTEE

FROM: Gary Graves
Acting County Executive

PUBLIC SAFETY, FINANCE &
STRATEGIC SUPPORT COUNCIL
COMMITTEE

Debra Figone
City Manager

DATE: July 9, 2009

**SUBJECT: STATUS REPORT REGARDING SAN JOSE CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT
EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE TO THE SANTA CLARA COUNTY
JAIL**

RECOMMENDATION

Accept the status report from the City of San Jose and County of Santa Clara relating to City Fire Department's emergency medical service (EMS) responses to the County Jail.

OUTCOME

This report provides a progress report relating to concerns raised by the San Jose Fire Department (SJFD) in its EMS response to the County Jail. Efforts to address concerns have been framed as follows:

- Partnership opportunities,
- Internal operational improvements for City Fire, and
- Next steps for further coordination between the two jurisdictions that will benefit jail patients and the community-at-large.

The report also represents continued positive strides between the City and County towards a stronger, more productive working relationship on issues of mutual interest.

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BACKGROUND

On April 2, 2008, the Rules & Open Government Committee directed to the Public Safety, Finance and Strategic Support Committee (PSFSSC) a memo authored by Councilmember Oliverio regarding the SJFD's EMS response to the County Jail. On April 17, 2008, City staff presented preliminary findings to the PSFSSC (a City Committee).

On October 16, 2008, City staff presented a report to the PSFSSC that responded to further questions raised by PSFSSC in April 2008, and outlined issues that still needed to be integrated and considered as the City further coordinated with the County on issues of concern.

The report outlined the key stakeholders that the City would need to coordinate/collaborate with to bring about the development of any formal agreement, City Fire's response to the County Jail, and also a preliminary review of the formal agreements, policies, and procedures impacting this matter. In that report, it was also acknowledged that the development of an MOU would depend on many factors and would take a great amount of coordination, and that, at a staff level, preliminary and informal discussions were more feasible. Since then, informal discussions have taken place and the information noted in this report highlights current progress.

ANALYSIS

Over the past few months, City and County staff have worked diligently to address several areas around the issue of SJFD's EMS and fire response to the County Jail. Following the October 2008 PSFSSC discussion, the City and County continued to meet at a staff level on improvement opportunities.

By late January 2009, after significant progress on joint training between the City and County, the County asked for a formal list of remaining issues from the City. These issues were transmitted in writing to the County in March 2009. The County responded, in writing, to the City in April.

After the City Manager and County Executive's review of the issues presented by SJFD and responses submitted by the County [via County Jail, Santa Clara Valley Health and Hospital-Children's Shelter and Custody Health Services (CSCHS, the County Department responsible for the provision of health care for detained children and incarcerated adults), SCVHHS-Emergency Medical Services, and County Communications], both parties agreed that there was no need for a formal MOU or agreement. Additionally, there has been productive dialogue between front-line staff members at the SJFD and County Jail issues

It is believed, with minor adjustments to current protocols, training activities and procedures, mutual benefit can be attained through improved response efficiencies to the County's Main Jail. Thus, the information in this report represents a resolution of various issues that have been addressed between the City and County. Additionally, the current formal agreements, policies and procedures that are in

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place can be used to continue to improve responses to the County Jail. In cases where more coordination is needed, City and County staff have noted those areas and next steps to be taken.

As noted earlier, the framework for resolving concerns has been organized into three categories and this report highlights key milestones:

1. City-County Partnership Opportunities;
2. Internal San Jose Fire Department Operational Issue Improvements; and,
3. Issues that need further coordination between the City and County.

1. CITY-COUNTY PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The following information provides a description of issues of concern that have been reviewed by both the City and County. It is organized by a summary of the issue and the City and County responses.

Issue #1: Firefighter Safety: Under this category are two main concerns related to:

- a) Entry into the County Jail by San Jose Fire, and
- b) Radio Communication within the facility.

(a) **Entry into the County Jail:** The City transmitted to the County the issue of firefighter safety during entry into the County's Main Jail. In particular, the City noted inconsistent application of the inmate restraint policy, as well as unfamiliarity with County Jail's "No Hostage Policy." Furthermore, concerns were raised by SJFD regarding the Jail's policies and procedures for ensuring egress out of the facility in the event an immediate evacuation was needed in an uncontrolled situation (e.g., uncontrolled fire).

To remedy the first issue (safety), the County offered more in-depth education and training on the "No Hostage Policy" and procedures, in the event a hostage situation was to occur; and also suggested increased exercises. SJFD accepted this offer.

To date the County has provided training, as well as extending an offer to provide additional training sessions, if needed. In the fall 2008, the County's Main Jail Facility Commander sponsored and personally provided training to Fire Stations #1, #5, #7 and #8. The training consisted of, but was not limited to, the "No Hostage Policy" and what Fire Personnel should do in a hostage situation¹. Trainings also include a general overview of jail operations, classification overview, facility tour, and description of medical training and equipment jail staff persons have to work with before paramedics arrive on the scene. County staff from the

¹ The "No Hostage Policy" is a notice to all inmates that taking a hostage will not assist them in effecting an escape. This is because Jail Officials will not negotiate the inmate's release for the release of the hostage. This policy does not in any way mean that a hostage will not be rescued. All emergency response and rescue protocols would continue to be followed.

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CSCHS Department also provided an overview of what training and equipment the nurses have, and their protocols for calling a Code 3 response.

Over the last several years, there have only been two reports where firefighters saw an inmate who was not locked down, or "unrestrained," while they were moving through the facility. In both cases, the inmates were several yards away from SJFD personnel. The County also notes that the inmates were "Inmate Workers"². To reduce SJFD concerns about unrestrained inmates, the fall 2008 training included information about the color-coding of inmate attire. SJFD responded positively.

Although the County is not recommending changes at this time to its policies, procedures, or protocols, the SJFD commends the County's quick response in addressing training needs and is confident that additional training and ongoing operational policy development, as required, will address previously noted and potential future firefighter safety concerns. The County has invited the City to participate in joint training at the Jail Facility.

Another issue for the City, outside of EMS response, is egress. The issue of egress generally relates to an exit path while fighting fires or in a situation that may require immediate evacuation of the Jail to minimize loss of life, such as an unstable structure. For controlled responses, such as an EMS response, the County's Main Jail staff secures the area of the Jail that SJFD will respond before fire personnel arrive on scene. Once City Fire personnel enter the secured perimeter, they are escorted in and out of the facility by Jail staff. The City would like more familiarity with the County's operational policies and procedures that relate to its security systems for "uncontrolled" events, such as a fire or a hazmat event, and will begin dialogue with the County at an upcoming meeting.

(b) Radio Communication: The City noted that there were areas inside the County's Main Jail facility that had poor to non-existent portable radio traffic reception. Firefighters noted that they were unable to send or receive routine or emergency communications via their portable radios, which is inconsistent with SJFD's standard operational procedures.

According to the County, radio communication difficulties were limited to the County's Main Jail South Facility (Old Jail). The County has offered to allow the City to conduct radio tests throughout the facility. Additionally, the County has suggested that City Fire personnel could use a Jail radio, which would allow the City direct communication with the County Jail's Central Control who could relay information to County Communications and in turn have that information relayed to City Fire dispatch operations as needed.

It has been concluded that, about a year ago, the City installed a new radio transmitter on top of the County Administration Building (located at 70 W. Hedding Street) and added a radio

² Inmate workers are low-risk inmates who perform janitorial functions about the jail. This classification is not violent and is usually in custody on low-level charges. County Jail staff always escort City Fire personnel. They are never left alone.

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receiver inside the County's Main Jail facility to improve radio transmit and receive coverage within this facility and the surrounding area. Furthermore, a thorough test was conducted by San Jose's GSA radio communications technical support staff within the County's Main Jail at the time of installation. The City's technical support staff indicated that they felt this new equipment had corrected the coverage problems previously experienced and reported by the City. Also, City technical support staff recently implemented system modifications that further improved internal and external public safety radio communication coverage and also eliminated the potential of site-selection errors by radio system users. However, since this is a recent change in technology, City staff will continue to monitor the system to ensure the desired outcome of improved communications within the County's Main Jail has been achieved.

Issue #2: Frequency of EMS Responses to County Jail

A second issue that was raised with the County involved the frequency of EMS responses to the County's Main Jail. The City responds on average 300 times per year to the County's Main Jail.

The City believes that SJFD is called to respond to the County's Main Jail too frequently; however, the Master Contract for Advanced Life Support (paramedic) services requires a paramedic response within 8 minutes to medical 9-1-1 calls within urban/metro areas. This includes the County's Main Jail facility. The County has a contract with American Medical Response (AMR) West to provide prehospital Advanced Life Support 9-1-1 medical response transport service, and, AMR West has a subcontract with the City of San Jose under which it receives compensation, of a little more than \$1.5 million annually. The contract stipulates clinical capability and response time performance requirements for medical complaint types, as determined using the Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDS). County EMS policy also permits adjustments in both clinical and response modes (i.e., lights and sirens versus no lights and sirens) under specific circumstances. Currently, the subcontract requires SJFD to respond to all medical emergency calls. The City has requested the County Jail staff consider changes in resource requirements for responses to the Main Jail that could be implemented. To the extent allowable pursuant to the contract requirements, the County and City can explore options such as expanded use of MPDS, triaging additional 9-1-1 medical calls, to improve system efficiencies and use of EMS resources.

Issue #3: Identification of a "Sally Port" and procedures to reduce time to patient access

The third issue raised with the County was the location of the Jail Infirmary on the third floor of the County's Main Jail, resulting in delayed paramedic care and the need for significant ingress into the Jail to obtain patient access. The City recommended that identification of areas within the Jail, to serve as a "sally port,"³ would reduce the time to administer treatment for patients that are stable

³ A sally port is a security door/hallway with access to the outside of the facility.

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enough to be transported to the port and reduce resource commitment times, improving unit availability.

After review by the County, County staff raised two concerns with the Sally Port concept: first unnecessary movement of a patient/inmate and second, security issues. The County has noted that unnecessarily moving a patient/inmate can further exacerbate their injury or illness. When an EMS call is made by/to the jail, it is assumed that the severity requires paramedic level intervention at the site of the emergency, which is the same as EMS calls outside the jail.

Secondarily, the County noted that a sally port is a security door/hallway with access to the outside of the facility. Use of a sally port in this manner would circumvent its security design purpose. For the safety and security of the facility and the community the County cannot authorize the use of sally ports for this purpose. For these reasons, the County cannot use a jail facility sally port as a place to stage inmates requiring medical response.

The County is confident that it provides appropriate security for all persons entering the jail facility. At the request of the City, many years ago, the County agreed to provide additional security for Fire Department Personnel responding to emergency calls within the jail. The security practices require jail personnel lockdown (secure) the area of the jail that Fire Personnel will respond to prior to their arrival. This agreement has been consistently maintained. Additionally, Fire Personnel are assigned an escort to accompany them throughout their entire visit.

The City agrees with the County, and places patient care, regardless of the location of the patient, as its highest priority. In the interest of patient care, given the County's concerns over the use of a Sally Port as a means to expedite paramedic treatment and transport, the City would like to explore other alternatives to creating a "medical staging area." Creating a medical staging area where patients, who are stable enough to be moved, could be moved. This would expedite patient treatment and transport and reduce the out of service time for limited City emergency response resources. The City looks forward to exploring opportunities to ensure the most efficient and effective utilization of both City and County resources.

2. INTERNAL CITY DEPARTMENT OPERATIONAL ISSUE IMPROVEMENTS

Concurrent to the City's identification of areas of concern regarding the EMS response to the Jail, the City also conducted a separate review of areas for SJFD to affect improvement which include:

1. Additional response time and resource reliability analysis to determine potential changes in which resource should respond to the facility;
2. Further development and refinement of operational policies related to response activities that address unstable operating environments;
3. Reinforcement of the importance of documenting noteworthy occurrences by SJFD staff; and,
4. Improved documenting of policy and procedural changes and amendments.

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All of these issues will be addressed at an operational level in the SJFD. It is important to note that the City desired a balanced approach for identifying needed improvements that include internal changes, as well as the recent changes agreed to between the City and County.

3. NEXT STEPS/ ISSUES THAT NEED FURTHER COORDINATION BETWEEN THE CITY AND COUNTY

The City and County look forward to continuing conversations that could improve communication, operational coordination, and efficiencies and ensure jail patients receive high-quality emergency services. City and County staff will work together to prepare an informational memo regarding additional actions, which will include an update by the end of the year:

Continued efforts to improve coordination and operational efficiencies through scheduled training and exercises, including:

- Review of emergency operational policies and procedures as it relates to issues, outside of EMS responses, such as the County Jail's security systems in the event of a fire or hazmat event.
- Review of resource response assignments as determined using the EMS-approved Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDS); and
- Opportunities for reducing response time to patient treatment and transport.

POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Not applicable.

PUBLIC OUTREACH/INTEREST

- ☐ **Criterion 1:** Requires Council action on the use of public funds equal to \$1 million or greater. **(Required: Website Posting)**
- ☐ **Criterion 2:** Adoption of a new or revised policy that may have implications for public health, safety, quality of life, or financial/economic vitality of the City. **(Required: E-mail and Website Posting)**
- ☐ **Criterion 3:** Consideration of proposed changes to service delivery, programs, staffing that may have impacts to community services and have been identified by staff, Council or a Community group that requires special outreach. **(Required: E-mail, Website Posting, Community Meetings, Notice in appropriate newspapers)**

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COORDINATION

This report has been developed by the City Manager's Office and the County Executive's Office in coordination with the San Jose Fire Department, County Department of Correction (County Jail), SCVHHS-CSCHS and Emergency Medical Services, and County Communications.

FISCAL/POLICY ALIGNMENT

This effort entailed review of several existing policies and procedures to ensure that both the City and County were adhering to them. There are no fiscal implications presented in this status report.

CEQA

Not a project.

For questions please contact:

Darryl VonRaesfeld, Fire Chief at 408-277-4444
Edward Flores, Chief of Correction at 408-808-3640.